

**Eastern Michigan University  
Emeritus Faculty and Staff Association Executive Board Meeting  
May 6, 2020**

Present: Jean Bush-Bacelis, Richard Douglass, Dave Geherin, Gerald V. "Skip" Lawver, Sally McCracken, Barbara Scheffer, and Alida Westman.

*Ex officio:* Howard Booth, Emeritus Faculty Representative to the Foundation, and Jill Hunsberger, Associate Vice President for Advancement

The meeting was by Zoom due to the pandemic and was called to order at 10:20 a.m.

The minutes of March 4, 2020, were approved.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

- 1. The Emeritus Spring Membership meeting and Spring Social** were postponed. It is not clear when it will be safe to meet, and EMU, like other universities, is still unclear how to proceed with respect to Fall classes, residence hall occupancy, athletic events, etc. Therefore, we will revisit this issue at the next executive board meeting in June when we may know more.
- 2. EMU President Smith is cost cutting.** The University's senior leadership team salary is reduced 7 percent, non-bargained for staff does not receive a salary increase in FY21, University travel is frozen, and capital projects, other than those prioritized, are suspended or delayed. The College of Business has been sold.
- 3. Fund raising campaigns** are best sent out by the Emeritus Association rather than the Foundation. Normally there is only one campaign per year, namely the Faculty & Staff campaign. However, needs are different during the pandemic, and we can make emeriti aware of specific needs. For example, Swoops Pantry is still providing food for students, and the Student Emergency Fund has a \$50,000 matching fund until the end of the month.
- 4. The most frequent questions** Sally received are about the re-registration on the portal and medigap reimbursement from Basic. Some people indicate that they are lonely and she stays in touch with them.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- 1. Election of Emeritus Association Executive Board Members.** This year Jean Bush-Bacelis, Skip Lawver, and Alida Westman agreed to serve again, so there was no new member to vote for. Given the pandemic, the suggestion was made to hold an election once the emergency has ended as indicated by the reopening of the residence halls.

During the Fall we will check on willingness to serve next year. Dave Geherin has tentatively suggested that he would like to retire from the board.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. How to stay in touch with the emeriti** was the topic of a brainstorming session. Suggestions are listed in the Appendix.
- 2. Emeriti are better prepared to deal with the need to stay at home.** Emeriti are used to being at home more frequently than people still working. Many emeriti are doing home projects that they had not gotten to. Most have income insecurity. However, emeriti are more vulnerable to the coronavirus. As a result, emeriti will weigh benefit and risk very carefully before choosing to go anywhere, especially if this involves getting together in a group.

## **REPORTS**

- 1. Howard Booth reported** that EMU has very professional looking ads during the Jeopardy television program.
- 2. Jill Hunsberger indicated** that on EMU's website is a list of gifts and grants. Jill also indicated that the Foundation Board has made available a list of people to call to see what they need. Some were sent care packages.

Emeriti may not be aware that they are not following their usual giving pattern because they are not reminded of the causes they normally support or that are more in need now. Some areas of need include students who are working as aides in nursing homes. They are responsible for their own PPE and they may not have it for pandemic conditions.

EMU has a university-wide Student Emergency Fund to help students in need. Each college also has one, and until the end of the month there is a \$50,000 matching fund for donations. Sally will mention this in the emailed letter she is going to prepare.

- 3. EMU Marketing & Communication** has been featuring notable alumni.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

The next meeting of the Executive Board will be by Zoom on June 3, 2020.

### Appendix

#### How to stay in touch with emeriti

- 1- Mailing out newsletters is problematic, because EMU employees are working from home, so there is not the staff to prepare a mass mailing. Further the person who normally did these, Debbie Clearwater, has left.
- 2- Sally will craft a newsletter to send out electronically.
- 3- Have Zoom meetings with emeriti or subgroups of emeriti. This can consist of a large group meeting initially followed by breakout groups.
- 4- Organize small meeting groups of 25 people or so centered around a topic or interest.
- 5- Send people information about Zoom and how to use it to create meetings with emeriti they want to be in touch with.

- 6- Ask whether people would like to create a blog site or Facebook site.
- 7- Some people indicate being lonely. Perhaps these can be encouraged to communicate with others who feel the same. Perhaps a chat site can bring them into contact with each other.
- 8- Ask emeriti what they want or need.
- 9- Faculty are clearing out their residences. If they have junk, 1-800-got-junk will remove it. If they have items others might use, posting them with a photo on a neighborhood website, such as Nextdoor.com, permits others to pick up the items. Similarly, if people have requests, they can post these.